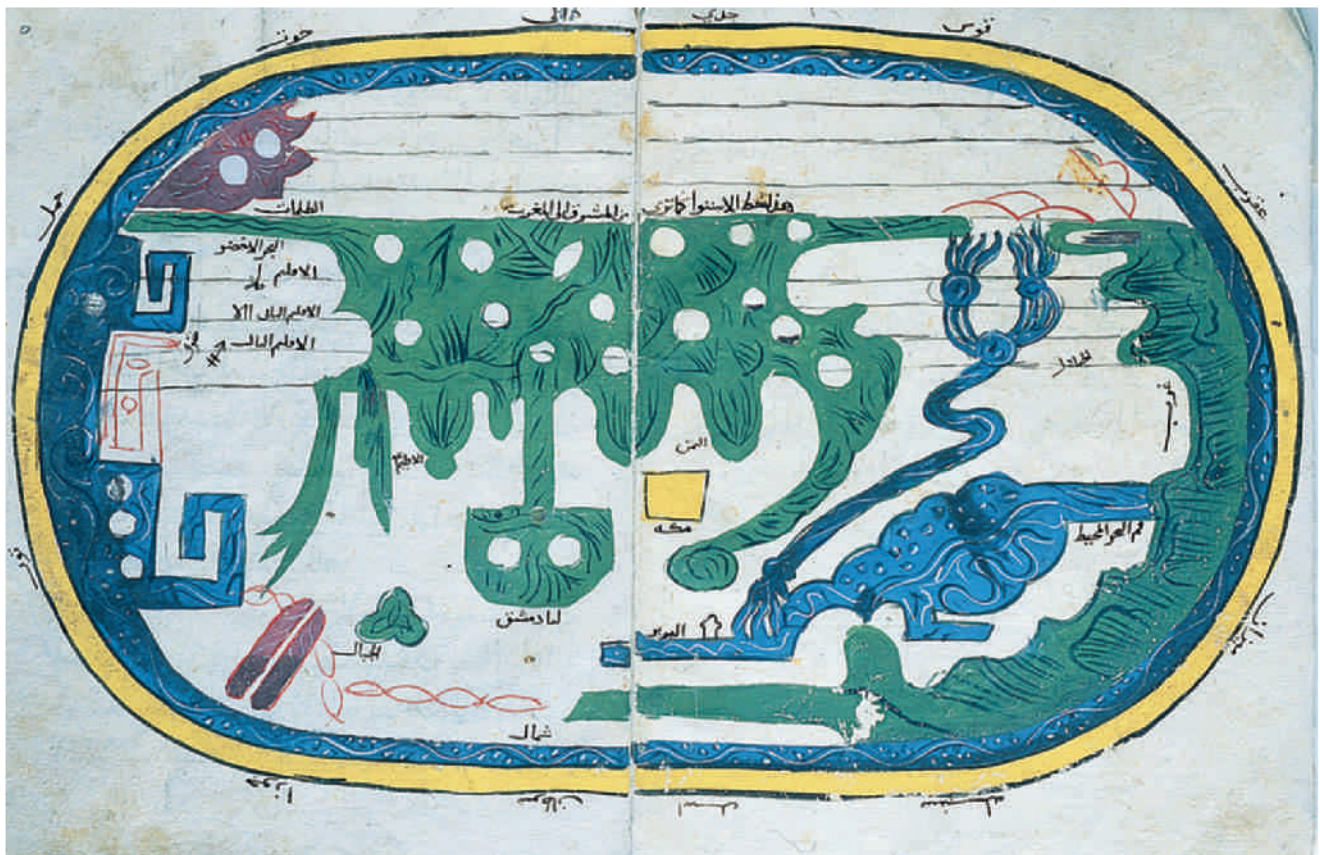


PART III

- CHAPTER 8 The Rise of Islam, 600–1200
- CHAPTER 9 Christian Societies Emerge in Europe, 600–1200
- CHAPTER 10 Inner and East Asia, 600–1200
- CHAPTER 11 Peoples and Civilizations of the Americas, 600–1500



Courtesy, Suleymaniye Library, Istanbul

Islamic World Map The oldest surviving world maps come from medieval Islamic culture. This example, a fourteenth-century copy of a presumed tenth-century original, is unusual in being oblong instead of round. South is at the top. The Mediterranean Sea is in blue in the lower right quadrant, with the Nile River extending upward until it ends in two sets of smaller streams at the Mountains of the Moon. Other bodies of water are green, except for the Encircling Sea that surrounds the entire map. The yellow square is Mecca.



Growth and Interaction of Cultural Communities, 600–1200

In 300 B.C.E., societies had only limited contacts beyond their frontiers. By 1200 C.E., this situation had changed. Traders, migrating peoples, and missionaries brought peoples together. Products and technologies moved along long-distance trade networks: the Silk Road across Asia, Saharan caravan routes, and sea-lanes connecting the Indian Ocean coastlands.

Migrating Bantu peoples from West Africa spread iron and new farming techniques through much of sub-Saharan Africa and helped foster a distinctive African culture. Conquering Arabs from the Arabian peninsula, inspired by the Prophet Muhammad, established Muslim rule from Spain to India, laying the foundation of a new culture.

In Asia, missionaries and pilgrims helped Buddhism spread from India to Sri Lanka, Tibet, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. The new faith interacted with older philosophies and religions to produce distinctive cultural patterns. Simultaneously, the Tang Empire in China disseminated Chinese culture and technologies throughout Inner and East Asia.

In Europe, monks and missionaries spread Christian beliefs that became enmeshed with new political and social structures: a struggle between royal and church authority in western Europe; a union of religious and imperial authority in the Byzantine east; and a similar but distinctive society in Kievan Russia. The Crusades reconnected western Europe with the lands of the east.

In the Western Hemisphere, the development of urban, agricultural civilizations in the Andes, the Yucatán lowlands, and the central plateau of Mexico climaxed in the Maya, Aztec, and Inca cultures. The cultural exchanges and interactions that mark this era in Eurasia and Africa have counterparts in the Western Hemisphere.



CHAPTER OUTLINE

- The Origins of Islam
- The Rise and Fall of the Caliphate, 632–1258
- Islamic Civilization
- Conclusion

DIVERSITY + DOMINANCE *Secretaries, Turks, and Beggars*

ENVIRONMENT + TECHNOLOGY *Chemistry*

MATERIAL CULTURE *Head Coverings*



Bibliothèque nationale de France

Baghdad Bookstore With the advent of papermaking, manufacturing books became increasingly common and inexpensive. As a result, bookstores also became more common. Notice how books are shelved on their sides in wall cubicles.



Visit the website and ebook for additional study materials and interactive tools: www.cengage.com/history/bullietearthpeople5e



The Rise of Islam, 600–1200

Knowledge of papermaking, which spread from China to the Middle East after Arab conquests in the seventh century C.E. established an Islamic caliphate stretching from Spain to Central Asia, provided a medium that was superior to papyrus and parchment and well suited to a variety of purposes. Maps, miniature paintings, and, of course, books became increasingly common and inexpensive. With cheaper books came bookstores, and one of the most informative manuscripts of the period of the Islamic caliphate is a *Fihrist*, or descriptive catalog, of the books sold at one bookstore in Baghdad.

Abu al-Faraj Muhammad al-Nadim, a man with good connections at the caliph's court, compiled the catalog, though his father probably founded the bookstore. Its latest entry dates to ca. 990, al-Nadim's death date. Superbly educated, al-Nadim wrote such well-informed comments on books and authors that his catalog presents a detailed survey of the intellectual world of Baghdad.

The first of the *Fihrist*'s ten books deals with Arabic language and sacred scriptures: the Quran, the Torah, and the Gospel. The second covers Arabic grammar, and the third writings from people connected with the caliph's court: historians, government officials, singers, jesters, and the ruler's boon companions. *Al-Nadim* means "book companion," so it is assumed that he knew this milieu well. After dealing with Arabic poetry, Muslim sects, and Islamic law in Books 3 through 6, he comes to Greek philosophy, science, and medicine in Book 7.

Most things we would find today in a bookstore are relegated to the final three chapters. Book 8 divides into three sections, the first being "Story Tellers and Stories." Here he lists a Persian book called *A Thousand Stories*, which in translation became *The Arabian Nights*. Al-Nadim's version no longer survives. The collection we have today comes from a manuscript written five hundred years later.

Then come sections about "Exorcists, Jugglers, and Magicians," followed by "Miscellaneous Subjects and Fables." These include sections on "Freckles, Twitching, Moles, and Shoulders," "Horsemanship, Bearing of Arms, the Implements of War," "Veterinary Surgery," "Birds of Prey, Sport with Them and Medical Care of Them," "Interpretation of Dreams," "Perfume," "Cooked Food," "Poisons," and "Amulets and Charms." Non-Muslim sects and foreign lands—India, Indochina, and China—fill Book 9, leaving Book 10 for a few final notes on philosophers not mentioned previously.

- How did the traditions and religious views of pre-Islamic peoples become integrated into the culture shaped by Islam?
- How did the Muslim community of the time of Muhammad differ from the society that developed after the Arab conquests?
- Was the Baghdad caliphate really the high point of Muslim civilization?
- How did regional diversity affect the development of Islamic civilization?

All together, the thousands of titles and authors commented on by al-Nadim provide both a panorama of what interested book buyers in tenth-century Baghdad and a saddening picture of how profound the loss of knowledge has been since that glorious era.

THE ORIGINS OF ISLAM

The Arabian Peninsula Before Muhammad

The Arabs of 600 C.E. lived exclusively in the Arabian peninsula and on the desert fringes of Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. Along their Euphrates frontier, the Sasanids (see Chapter 7) subsidized nomadic Arab chieftains to protect their empire from invasion. The Byzantines did the same with Arabs on their Jordanian frontier. Arab pastoralists farther to the south remained isolated and independent, seldom engaging the attention of the shahs and emperors. It was in these interior Arabian lands that the religion of Islam took form.

Throughout history more people living on the Arabian peninsula have subsisted as farmers than as pastoral nomads. Farming villages support the comparatively dense population of Yemen, where abundant rainfall waters the highlands during the spring monsoon. Small inlets along the southern coast favored fishing and trading communities. The enormous sea of sand known as the “Empty Quarter” isolated many southern regions from the Arabian interior. In the seventh century, most people in southern Arabia knew more about Africa, India, and the Persian Gulf than about the forbidding interior and the scattered camel- and sheep-herding nomads who lived there.

Caravan trading provided a rare link among peoples. Nomads derived income from providing camels, guides, and safe passage to merchants bringing the primary product of the south, the aromatic resins frankincense and myrrh, to northern customers. Return caravans brought manufactured products from Mesopotamia and Syria.

Nomad dominance of the caravan trade received a boost from the invention of militarily efficient camel saddles. This contributed to the rise of Arab-dominated caravan cities and to Arab pastoralists becoming the primary suppliers of animal power throughout the region. By 600 C.E., wheeled vehicles—mostly ox carts and horse-drawn chariots—had all but disappeared from the Middle East, replaced by pack camels and donkeys.

As explained in Chapter 7, Arabs who accompanied the caravans became familiar with the cultures and lifestyles of the Sasanid and Byzantine Empires, and many of those who pastured their herds on the imperial frontiers adopted one form or another of Christianity. Even in the interior deserts, Semitic polytheism, with its worship of natural forces and celestial bodies, began to encounter more sophisticated religions.

Mecca, a late-blooming caravan city, occupies a barren mountain valley halfway between Yemen and Syria and somewhat inland from the Red Sea coast (see Map 8.1). A nomadic kin group known as the Quraysh (**koo-RYYSH**) settled in Mecca in the fifth century and assumed control of trade. Mecca rapidly achieved a measure of prosperity, partly because it was too far from Byzantine Syria, Sasanid Iraq, and Ethiopian-controlled Yemen for them to attack it.

A cubical shrine with idols inside called the Ka’ba (**KAH-buh**), a holy well called Zamzam, and a sacred precinct surrounding the two wherein killing was prohibited contributed to the emergence of Mecca as a pilgrimage site. Some Meccans associated the shrine with stories known to Jews and Christians. They regarded Abraham (Ibrahim in Arabic) as the builder of the Ka’ba, and they identified a site outside Mecca as the location where God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son. The son was not Isaac (Ishaq in Arabic), the son of Sarah, but Ishmael (Isma’il in Arabic), the son of Hagar, cited in the Bible as the forefather of the Arabs.

Muhammad in Mecca

Born in Mecca in 570, **Muhammad** grew up an orphan in the house of his uncle. He engaged in trade and married a Quraysh widow named Khadija (**kah-DEE-juh**), whose caravan inter-



AP* Exam Tip The origin of Islam is an important topic on both the multiple choice and the essay section of the AP exam.

Caravan Trade

Mecca City in western Arabia; birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad and ritual center of the Islamic religion.

Mecca, a Caravan City

Pilgrimage Center

Muhammad Arab prophet; founder of religion of Islam.

CHRONOLOGY		
	The Arab Lands	Iran and Central Asia
200		
600	570–632 Life of the Prophet Muhammad	
	634 Conquests of Iraq and Syria commence	
	639–42 Conquest of Egypt by Arabs	
	656–61 Ali caliph; first civil war	
	661–750 Umayyad Caliphate rules from Damascus	
700		
	711 Berbers and Arabs invade Spain from North Africa	711 Arabs capture Sind in India
	750 Beginning of Abbasid Caliphate	747 Abbasid revolt begins in Khurasan
	755 Umayyad state established in Spain	
	776–809 Caliphate of Harun al-Rashid	
800		
	835–92 Abbasid capital moved from Baghdad to Samarra	
		875 Independent Samanid state founded in Bukhara
900		
	909 Fatimids seize North Africa, found Shi'ite Caliphate	
	929 Abd al-Rahman III declares himself caliph in Cordoba	
	945 Shi'ite Buyids take control in Baghdad	945 Buyids from northern Iran take control of Abbasid Caliphate
	969 Fatimids conquer Egypt	
1000		
		1036 Beginning of Turkish Seljuk rule in Khurasan
	1055 Seljuk Turks take control in Baghdad	
	1099 First Crusade captures Jerusalem	
	1171 Fall of Fatimid Egypt	
	1187 Saladin recaptures Jerusalem	
	1250 Mamluks control Egypt	
	1258 Mongols sack Baghdad and end Abbasid Caliphate	
	1260 Mamluks defeat Mongols at Ain Jalut	

ests he superintended. Their son died in childhood, but several daughters survived. Around 610 Muhammad began meditating at night in the mountainous terrain around Mecca. During one night vigil, known to later tradition as the “Night of Power and Excellence,” a being whom Muhammad later understood to be the angel Gabriel (Jibra’il in Arabic) spoke to him:

Proclaim! In the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clot of congealed blood. Proclaim! And your Lord is the Most Bountiful. He who has taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew not.¹

“Messenger of God”

For three years Muhammad shared this and subsequent revelations only with close friends and family members. This period culminated in his conviction that he was hearing the words of God (Allah [AH-luh] in Arabic). Khadija, his uncle’s son Ali, his friend Abu Bakr (ah-boo BAK-uh), and others close to him shared this conviction. The revelations continued until Muhammad’s death in 632.

Like most people of the time, including Christians and Jews, the Arabs believed in unseen spirits: gods, demonic *shaitans*, and desert spirits called *jinn*s who were thought to possess seers and poets. Therefore, when Muhammad recited his rhymed revelations in public, many people believed he was inspired by an unseen spirit, even if it was not, as Muhammad asserted, the one true god.

Muhammad's earliest revelations called on people to witness that one god had created the universe and everything in it, including themselves. At the end of time, their souls would be judged, their sins balanced against their good deeds. The blameless would go to paradise; the sinful would taste hellfire:

*By the night as it conceals the light;
By the day as it appears in glory;
By the mystery of the creation of male and female;
Verily, the ends ye strive for are diverse.
So he who gives in charity and fears God,
And in all sincerity testifies to the best,
We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Bliss.
But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient,
And gives the lie to the best,
We will indeed make smooth for him the path to misery.²*

Muslim An adherent of the Islamic religion; a person who “submits” (in Arabic, *Islam* means “submission”) to the will of God.

Islam Religion expounded by the Prophet Muhammad on the basis of his reception of divine revelations, which were collected after his death into the Quran. In the tradition of Judaism and Christianity, and sharing much of their lore, Islam calls on all people to recognize one creator god—Allah—who rewards or punishes believers after death according to how they led their lives.

The revelation called all people to submit to God and accept Muhammad as the last of his messengers. Doing so made one a **Muslim**, meaning one who makes “submission,” **Islam**, to the will of God.

Because earlier messengers mentioned in the revelations included Noah, Moses, and Jesus, Muhammad's hearers connected his message with Judaism and Christianity, religions they were already familiar with. Yet his revelations charged the Jews and Christians with being negligent in preserving God's revealed word. Thus, even though they identified Abraham/Ibrahim, whom Muslims consider the first Muslim, as the builder of the Ka'ba, which superseded Jerusalem as the focus of Muslim prayer in 624, Muhammad's followers considered his revelation more perfect than the Bible because it had not gone through an editing process.

Some scholars maintain that Muhammad appealed especially to people distressed over wealth replacing kinship as the most important aspect of social relations and over neglect of orphans and other powerless people. Most Muslims, however, put less emphasis on a social message than on the power and beauty of Muhammad's recitations.

Formation of the Umma

The Hijra

Medina City in western Arabia to which the Prophet Muhammad and his followers emigrated in 622 to escape persecution in Mecca.

umma The community of all Muslims. A major innovation against the background of seventh-century Arabia, where traditionally kinship rather than faith had determined membership in a community.

The Surrender of Mecca

Mecca's leaders, fearing that accepting Muhammad as the sole agent of the one true God would threaten their power and prosperity, pressured his kin to disavow him and persecuted the weakest of his followers. Stymied by this hostility, Muhammad and his followers fled Mecca in 622 to take up residence in the agricultural community of **Medina** 215 miles (346 kilometers) to the north. This hijra (**Hij-ruh**) marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar.

Prior to the hijra, Medinan representatives had met with Muhammad and agreed to accept and protect him and his followers because they saw him as an inspired leader who could calm their perpetual feuding. Together, the Meccan migrants and major groups in Medina bound themselves into a single **umma** (**UM-muh**), a community defined by acceptance of Islam and of Muhammad as the “Messenger of God,” his most common title. Partly because three Jewish kin groups chose to retain their own faith, the direction of prayer was changed from Jerusalem toward the Ka'ba in Mecca, now thought of as the “House of God.”

Having left their Meccan kin groups, the immigrants in Medina felt vulnerable. During the last decade of his life, Muhammad took active responsibility for his umma. Fresh revelations provided a framework for regulating social and legal affairs and stirred the Muslims to fight against the still-unbelieving city of Mecca. At various points during the war, Muhammad charged the Jewish kin groups, whom he had initially hoped would recognize him as God's messenger, with disloyalty, and he finally expelled or eliminated them. The sporadic war, largely conducted by raiding and negotiating with desert nomads, sapped Mecca's strength and convinced many Meccans that God favored Muhammad. In 630 Mecca surrendered, and Muhammad and his followers made the pilgrimage to the Ka'ba unhindered.



MAP 8.1 Early Expansion of Muslim Rule Arab conquests of the first Islamic century brought vast territory under Muslim rule, but conversion to Islam proceeded slowly. In most areas outside the Arabian peninsula, the only region where Arabic was then spoken, conversion did not accelerate until the third century after the conquest.

Interactive Map

PRIMARY SOURCE: The Constitution of Medina:

Muslims and Jews at the Dawn of Islam Learn how Muhammad, whose teaching was at first rejected in Mecca, met with success in Medina, in part by allying himself with the local Jewish community.

caliphate Office established in succession to the Prophet Muhammad, to rule the Islamic empire; also the name of that empire.

Quran Book composed of divine revelations made to the Prophet Muhammad between ca. 610 and his death in 632; the sacred text of the religion of Islam.

Formation of the Quran

Muhammad stayed in Medina, which had grown into a bustling city-state. Delegations came to him from all over Arabia and returned home with believers who could teach them about Islam and collect their alms. Muhammad's mission to bring God's message to humanity had brought him unchallenged control of a state that was coming to dominate the Arabian peninsula.

In 632, after a brief illness, Muhammad died. Within twenty-four hours a group of Medinan leaders, along with three of Muhammad's close friends, determined that Abu Bakr, one of the earliest believers and the father of Muhammad's favorite wife A'isha (**AH-ee-shah**), should succeed him. They called him the *khalifa* (**kah-LEE-fuh**), or "successor," the English version of which is *caliph*. But calling Abu Bakr a successor did not clarify his powers. Everyone knew that neither Abu Bakr nor anyone else could receive revelations, and they likewise knew that Muhammad's revelations made no provision for succession or for any government purpose beyond maintaining the umma.

Abu Bakr continued and confirmed Muhammad's religious practices, notably the so-called Five Pillars of Islam: (1) avowal that there is only one god and Muhammad is his messenger, (2) prayer five times a day, (3) fasting during the lunar month of Ramadan, (4) paying alms, and (5) making the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once during one's lifetime. He also reestablished and expanded Muslim authority over Arabia's communities, some of which had abandoned their allegiance to Medina or followed various would-be prophets. Muslim armies fought hard to confirm the authority of the newborn **caliphate**. In the process, some fighting spilled over into non-Arab areas in Iraq.

Reportedly, Abu Bakr ordered the men who had written down Muhammad's revelations to collect them in a book. Hitherto written haphazardly on pieces of leather or bone, these now became a single document gathered into chapters. Muslims believe the **Quran** (**kuh-RAHN**), or the Recitation, acquired its final form around the year 650. They see it not as the words of Muhammad but as the unalterable word of God. Theologically, it compares not so much to the Bible, a book written by many hands over many centuries, as to the person of Jesus Christ, whom Christians consider an earthly manifestation of God.

Muhammad's Cousin Ali**PRIMARY SOURCE: The Quran: Muslim Devotion to God**

These selections contain a number of the tenets of Islam and shed light on the connections between Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.

Shi'ites Muslims belonging to the branch of Islam believing that God vests leadership of the community in a descendant of Muhammad's son-in-law Ali. Shi'ism is the state religion of Iran.

Shi'ites and Sunnis

Umayyad Caliphate First hereditary dynasty of Muslim caliphs (661 to 750). From their capital at Damascus, the Umayyads ruled an empire that extended from Spain to India. Overthrown by the Abbasid Caliphate.

Sunnis Muslims belonging to branch of Islam believing that the community should select its own leadership. The majority religion in most Islamic countries.

Though united in accepting God's will, the umma soon disagreed over the succession to the caliphate. When rebels assassinated the third caliph, Uthman (**ooth-MAHN**), in 656 and nominated Ali, Muhammad's first cousin and the husband of his daughter Fatima, to succeed him, civil war broke out. Ali had been passed over three times previously, even though many people considered him to be the Prophet's natural heir. Those who believed Ali was the Prophet's heir came to be known as **Shi'ites**, after the Arabic term *Shi'at Ali* ("Party of Ali").

When Ali accepted the nomination to be caliph, two of Muhammad's close companions and his favorite wife A'isha challenged him. Ali defeated them in the Battle of the Camel (656), so called because the fighting raged around the camel on which A'isha was seated in an enclosed woman's saddle.

After the battle, the governor of Syria, Mu'awiya (**moo-AH-we-yuh**), a kinsman of the slain Uthman from the Umayya clan of the Quraysh, renewed the challenge. Inconclusive battle gave way to arbitration. The arbitrators decided that Uthman, whom his assassins considered corrupt, had not deserved death and that Ali had erred in accepting the caliphate. Ali rejected these findings, but before fighting could resume, one of his own supporters killed him for agreeing to the arbitration. Mu'awiya offered Ali's son Hasan a dignified retirement and thus emerged as caliph in 661.

Mu'awiya chose his own son, Yazid, to succeed him, thereby instituting the **Umayyad (oo-MY-ad) Caliphate**. When Hasan's brother Husayn revolted in 680 to reestablish the right of Ali's family to rule, Yazid ordered Husayn and his family killed. Sympathy for Husayn's martyrdom helped transform Shi'ism from a political movement into a religious sect.

Several variations in Shi'ite belief developed, but Shi'ites all agree that Ali was the rightful successor to Muhammad and that God's choice as Imam, leader of the Muslim community, has always been one or another of Ali's descendants. They see the caliphal office as more secular than religious. Because the Shi'ites seldom held power, their religious feelings came to focus on outpourings of sympathy for Husayn and other martyrs and on messianic dreams that one of their Imams would someday triumph.

Those Muslims who supported the first three caliphs gradually came to be called "People of Tradition and Community"—in Arabic, *Ahl al-Sunna wa'l-Jama'a*, **Sunnis** for short. Sunnis consider the caliphs to be Imams. As for Ali's followers who had abhorred his acceptance of arbitration, they evolved into small and rebellious Kharijite sects (from *kharaja*, meaning "to secede or rebel") claiming righteousness for themselves alone. These three divisions of Islam, the last now quite minor, still survive.

SECTION REVIEW

- Islam emerged among the nomadic pastoralists and caravan traders of the Arabian peninsula.
- Mecca grew as a caravan city and pilgrimage site identified with Jewish and Christian stories.
- Muhammad experienced revelations that called people to submit to God's will.
- Facing hostility in Mecca, Muhammad and his followers fled to Medina, where they formed the umma.
- As caliph succeeding Muhammad, Abu Bakr confirmed the Five Pillars of Islam and reportedly ordered the composition of the Quran.
- Civil war within the umma resulted in the Sunni/Shi'ite division and the foundation of the Umayyad Caliphate.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE CALIPHATE, 632–1258

The Islamic caliphate built on the conquests the Arabs carried out after Muhammad's death gave birth to a dynamic and creative religious society. By the late 800s, however, one piece after

another of this huge realm broke away. Yet the idea of a caliphate, however unrealistic, remains today a touchstone of Sunni belief in the unity of the umma.

Sunni Islam never gave a single person the power to define true belief, expel heretics, and discipline clergy. Thus, unlike Christian popes and patriarchs, the caliphs had little basis for reestablishing their universal authority once they lost political and military power.

The Islamic Conquests, 634–711

From Spain to Pakistan



AP* Exam Tip The expansion of Islam to many parts of Afro-Eurasia is an important point on the AP exam.

Arab conquests outside Arabia began under the second caliph, Umar (r. 634–644). Arab armies wrenched Syria (636) and Egypt (639–642) away from the Byzantine Empire and defeated the last Sasanid shah, Yazdigird III (r. 632–651). After a decade-long lull, expansion began again. Tunisia fell and became the governing center from which was organized, in 711, the conquest of Spain by an Arab-led army mostly composed of Berbers from North Africa. In the same year, Sind—the southern Indus Valley in today’s Pakistan—succumbed to invaders from Iraq. The Muslim dominion remained roughly stable in size for three centuries until conquest began anew in the eleventh century. India and Anatolia experienced invasions, and sub-Saharan Africa and other regions saw Islam expand peacefully by trade and conversion.

Muhammad’s close companions, men of political and economic sophistication inspired by his charisma, guided the conquests. The social structure and hardy nature of Arab society lent itself to flexible military operations; and the authority of Medina, reconfirmed during the caliphate of Abu Bakr, ensured obedience.

The decision made during Umar’s caliphate to prohibit Arabs from assuming ownership of conquered territory proved important. Umar tied army service, with its regular pay and windfalls of booty, to residence in military camps—two in Iraq (Kufa and Basra), one in Egypt (Fustat), and one in Tunisia (Qairawan). East of Iraq, Arabs settled around small garrison towns at strategic locations and in one large garrison at Marv in present-day Turkmenistan. This policy kept the armies together and ready for action and preserved normal life in the countryside, where some three-fourths of the population lived. Only a tiny proportion of the Syrian, Egyptian, Iranian, and Iraqi populations understood the Arabic language.

The million or so Arabs who participated in the conquests over several generations constituted a small, self-isolated ruling minority living on the taxes paid by a vastly larger non-Arab, non-Muslim subject population. The Arabs had little material incentive to encourage conversion, and there is no evidence of coherent missionary efforts to spread Islam during the conquest period.

The Umayyad and Early Abbasid Caliphates, 661–850

The Umayyad caliphs presided over an Arab realm rather than a religious empire. Ruling from Damascus, their armies consisted almost entirely of Muslim Arabs. Sasanid and Byzantine administrative practices continued in force. Only gradually did the caliphs replace non-Muslim secretaries and tax officials with Muslims and introduce Arabic as the language of government. Distinctively Muslim silver and gold coins introduced early in the eighth century symbolized the new order. Henceforward, silver dirhams and gold dinars bearing Arabic religious phrases circulated in monetary exchanges from Morocco to the frontiers of China.

The Umayyad dynasty fell in 750 after a decade of growing unrest. Converts to Islam numbered no more than 10 percent of the indigenous population, but they were still important because of the comparatively small number of Arab warriors. These converts resented Arab social domination. In addition, non-Syrian Arabs envied the Syrian domination of caliphal affairs, and pious Muslims looked askance at the secular and even irreligious behavior of the caliphs. Finally, Shi’ites and Kharijites attacked the Umayyad family’s legitimacy as rulers, launching a number of rebellions.

In 750 one rebellion, in the region of Khurasan (**kor-uh-SAHN**) in what is today northeastern Iran, overthrew the last Umayyad caliph, though one family member escaped to Spain to found an Umayyad principality there in 755. Many Shi’ites supported the rebellion, thinking they were fighting for the family of Ali. As it turned out, the family of Abbas, one of Muhammad’s uncles, controlled the secret organization that coordinated the revolt. Upon victory they established the **Abbasid (ah-BASS-id) Caliphate**. Some of the Abbasid caliphs who ruled after 750 befriended their relatives in Ali’s family, and one even flirted with transferring the caliphate to

Non-Arab Converts to Islam

Abbasid Caliphate Descendants of the Prophet Muhammad’s uncle, al-Abbas, the Abbasids overthrew the Umayyad Caliphate and ruled an Islamic empire from their capital in Baghdad (founded 762) from 750 to 1258.

The Abbasid Revolution

them. The Abbasid family, however, held on to the caliphate until 1258, when Mongol invaders killed the last of them in Baghdad (see Chapter 12).

Initially, the Abbasid dynasty made a fine show of leadership and piety. Theology and religious law became preoccupations at court and among a growing community of scholars devoted to interpreting the Quran, collecting the sayings of the Prophet, and compiling Arabic grammar. (In recent years, some Western scholars have maintained that the Quran, the sayings of the Prophet, and the biography of the Prophet were all composed around this time to provide a legendary base for the regime. This reinterpretation of Islamic origins has not been generally accepted either in the scholarly community or among Muslims.) Some caliphs sponsored ambitious projects to translate great works of Greek, Persian, and Indian thought into Arabic.

Persianization of the Caliphate

With its roots among the semi-Persianized Arabs of Khurasan, the new dynasty gradually adopted the ceremonies and customs of the Sasanid shahs. Government grew increasingly complex in Baghdad, the newly built capital city on the Tigris River. As more non-Arabs converted to Islam, the ruling elite became more cosmopolitan. Greek, Iranian, Central Asian, and African cultural currents met in the capital and gave rise to an abundance of literary works, a process facilitated by the introduction of papermaking from China. Arab poets neglected the traditional odes extolling life in the desert and wrote instead wine songs (despite Islam's prohibition of alcohol) or poems in praise of their patrons.

The translation of Aristotle into Arabic, the founding of the main currents of theology and law, and the splendor of the Abbasid court—reflected in stories of *The Arabian Nights* set in the time of the caliph Harun al-Rashid (**hah-ROON al-rah-SHEED**) (r. 776–809)—in some respects warrant calling the early Abbasid period a “golden age.” Yet the refinement of Baghdad culture only slowly made its way into the provinces. Egypt remained predominantly Christian and Coptic-speaking in the early Abbasid period, and Iran never adopted Arabic as a spoken tongue. Most of Berber-speaking North Africa rebelled and freed itself of direct caliphal rule after 740.

Gradual conversion to Islam among the conquered population accelerated in the second quarter of the ninth century. Social discrimination against non-Arab converts gradually faded, and the Arabs themselves—at least those living in cosmopolitan urban settings—lost their previously strong attachment to kinship and ethnic identity.

Political Fragmentation, 850–1050

Abbasid decline became evident in the second half of the ninth century as conversion to Islam accelerated (see Map 8.2). No government ruling so vast an empire could hold power easily. Caravans traveled only 20 miles (32 kilometers) a day, and the couriers of the caliphal post system usually did not exceed 100 miles (160 kilometers) a day. News of frontier revolts took weeks to reach Baghdad. Military responses might take months.

During the first two Islamic centuries, revolts against Muslim rule had been a concern. The Muslim umma had therefore clung together, despite the long distances. But with the growing conversion of the population to Islam, fears that Islamic dominion might be overthrown faded. Once they became the overwhelming majority, Muslims realized that a highly centralized empire did not necessarily serve the interests of all the people.

By the middle of the ninth century, revolts targeting Arab or Muslim domination gave way to movements within the Islamic community concentrating on seizure of territory and formation of principalities. None of the states carved out of the Abbasid Caliphate after that time repudiated or even threatened Islam. They did, however, cut the flow of tax revenues to Baghdad, thereby increasing local prosperity.

Increasingly starved for funds by breakaway provinces and by an unexplained fall in revenues from Iraq itself, the caliphate experienced a crisis in the late ninth century. Distrusting generals and troops from outlying areas, the caliphs purchased Turkic slaves, **mamluks** (**MAM-luke**), from Central Asia and established them as a standing army. Well trained and hardy, the Turks proved an effective but expensive military force. When the government could not pay them, the mamluks took it on themselves to seat and unseat caliphs, a process made easier by the construction of a new capital at Samarra, north of Baghdad on the Tigris River.

The Turks dominated Samarra without interference from an unruly Baghdad populace that regarded them as rude and highhanded. However, the money and effort that went into the huge city, which was occupied only from 835 to 892, further sapped the caliphs' financial strength and deflected labor from more productive pursuits.

Slave Soldiers

mamluks Under the Islamic system of military slavery, Turkic military slaves who formed an important part of the armed forces of the Abbasid Caliphate of the ninth and tenth centuries. Mamluks eventually founded their own state, ruling Egypt and Syria (1250–1517).



MAP 8.2 Rise and Fall of the Abbasid Caliphate Though Abbasid rulers occupied the caliphal seat in Iraq from 750 to 1258, when Mongol armies destroyed Baghdad, real political power waned sharply and steadily after 850. The rival caliphates of the Fatimids (909–1171) and Spanish Umayyads (929–976) were comparatively short-lived.

Interactive Map

The Buyids

In 945, after several attempts to find a strongman to save it, the Abbasid Caliphate fell under the control of rude mountain warriors from Daylam in northern Iran. Led by the Shi'ite Buyid (BOO-yid) family, they conquered western Iran as well as Iraq. Each Buyid commander ruled his own principality. After two centuries of glory, the sun began to set on Baghdad. The Abbasid caliph remained, but the Buyid princes controlled him. Being Shi'ites, the Buyids had no special reverence for the Sunni caliph. The Shi'ite teachings they followed held that the twelfth and last Imam had disappeared around 873 and would return as a messiah only at the end of time. Thus they had no Shi'ite Imam to defer to and retained the caliph only to help control their predominantly Sunni subjects.

Iranian States

Dynamic growth in outlying provinces paralleled the caliphate's gradual loss of temporal power. In the east in 875, the dynasty of the Samanids (sah-MAN-id), one of several Iranian families to achieve independence, established a glittering court in Bukhara, a major city on the Silk Road (see Map 8.2). Samanid princes patronized literature and learning, but the language they favored was Persian written in Arabic letters. For the first time, a non-Arabic literature rose to challenge the eminence of Arabic within the Islamic world.

African States

In the west, the Berber revolts against Arab rule led to the appearance after 740 of the city-states of Sijilmasa (sih-jil-MAS-suh) and Tahert (TAH-hert) on the northern fringe of the Sahara. The Kharijite beliefs of these states' rulers interfered with their east-west overland trade and led them to develop the first regular trade across the Sahara desert. Once traders looked to the desert, they discovered that Berber speakers in the southern Sahara were already carrying salt from the desert into the Sahel region. The northern traders discovered that they could trade salt for gold by providing the southern nomads, who controlled the salt sources but had little use for gold, with more useful products, such as copper and manufactured goods. Sijilmasa and Tahert became wealthy cities, the former minting gold coins that circulated as far away as Egypt and Syria.

Ghana First known kingdom in sub-Saharan West Africa between the sixth and thirteenth centuries c.e. Also the modern West African country once known as the Gold Coast.

The earliest known sub-Saharan beneficiary of the new exchange system was the kingdom of Ghana (GAH-nuh), which first appears in an Arabic text of the late eighth century as the

Mosque of Ibn Tulun in Fustat Completed in 877, this mosque symbolized Egypt becoming for the first time a quasi-independent province under its governor. The kiosk in the center of the courtyard contains fountains for washing before prayer. Before its restoration in the thirteenth century, the mosque had a spiral minaret and a door to an adjoining governor's palace.



Ellen Rooney/Robert Harding World Imagery

“land of gold.” Few details survive about the early years of this realm, which was established by the Soninke (**soh-NIN-kay**) people and covered parts of Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal, but it prospered until 1076, when it was conquered by nomads from the desert. Ghana was one of the first lands outside the orbit of the caliphate to experience a gradual and peaceful conversion to Islam.

The Fatimid Caliphate

The North African city-states lost their independence after the Fatimid (**FAT-uh-mid**) dynasty, whose members claimed (perhaps falsely) to be Shi’ite Imams descended from Ali, established itself in Tunisia in 909. After consolidating their hold on northwest Africa, the Fatimids culminated their rise to power by conquering Egypt in 969. Claiming the title of caliph in a direct challenge to the Abbasids, the Fatimid rulers governed from a palace complex outside the old conquest-era garrison city of Fustat (**fuss-THAT**). They named the complex Cairo. For the first time Egypt became a major cultural, intellectual, and political center of Islam. The abundance of Fatimid gold coinage, now channeled to Egypt from West Africa, made the Fatimids an economic power in the Mediterranean.

Islamic Spain

Cut off from the rest of the Islamic world by the Strait of Gibraltar and, from 740 onward, by independent city-states in Morocco and Algeria, Umayyad Spain developed a distinctive Islamic culture blending Roman, Germanic, and Jewish traditions with those of the Arabs and Berbers. Historians disagree on how rapidly and completely the Spanish population converted to Islam. If we assume a process similar to that in the eastern regions, it seems likely that the most rapid surge in Islamization occurred in the middle of the tenth century.

As in the east, governing cities symbolized the Islamic presence in al-Andalus, as the Muslims called their Iberian territories. Cordoba, Seville, Toledo, and other cities grew substantially, becoming much larger and richer than contemporary cities in neighboring France. Converts to Islam and their descendants, unconverted Arabic-speaking Christians, and Jews joined with the comparatively few descendants of Arab settlers to create new architectural and literary styles. In the countryside, where the Berbers preferred to settle, a fusion of preexisting agricultural technologies with new crops, notably citrus fruits, and irrigation techniques from the east gave Spain the most diverse and sophisticated agricultural economy in Europe.

The rulers of al-Andalus took the title *caliph* only in 929, when Abd al-Rahman (**AHB-d al-ruh-MAHN**) III (r. 912–961) did so in response to a similar declaration by the newly established (909) Fatimid ruler in Tunisia. By the century’s end, however, this caliphate encountered challenges from breakaway movements that eventually splintered al-Andalus into a number of small states. Political decay did not impede cultural growth. Some of the greatest writers and think-



AP* Exam Tip The Islamic political system in Spain is an important point for the AP exam.

Religions Flourishing Together



Tomb of the Samanids in Bukhara

This early-tenth-century structure has the basic layout of a Zoroastrian fire temple: a dome on top of a cube. However, geometric ornamentation in baked brick marks it as an early masterpiece of Islamic architecture. The Samanid family achieved independence as rulers of northeastern Iran and western Central Asia in the tenth century.



Bridgeman-Graudon/Art Resource, NY

ers in Jewish history worked in Muslim Spain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, sometimes writing in Arabic, sometimes in Hebrew. Judah Halevi (1075–1141) composed exquisite poetry and explored questions of religious philosophy. Maimonides (1135–1204) made a major compilation of Judaic law and expounded on Aristotelian philosophy. At the same time, Islamic thought in Spain attained its loftiest peaks in Ibn Hazm's (994–1064) treatises on love and other subjects, the Aristotelian philosophical writings of Ibn Rushd (**IB-uhn RUSHED**) (1126–1198, known in Latin as Averroës [**uh-VEER-oh-eez**]) and Ibn Tufayl (**IB-uhn too-FILE**) (d. 1185), and the mystic speculations of Ibn al-Arabi (**IB-uhn ahl-AH-rah-bee**) (1165–1240). Christians, too, shared in the intellectual and cultural dynamism of al-Andalus. Translations from Arabic to Latin made during this period had a profound effect on the later intellectual development of western Europe (see Chapter 9).

The Samanids, Fatimids, and Spanish Umayyads, three of many regional principalities, represent the political diversity and awakening of local awareness that coincided with Abbasid decline. Yet drawing and redrawing political boundaries did not result in the rigid division of the Islamic world into kingdoms. Religious and cultural developments, particularly the rise in cities of a social group of religious scholars known as the **ulama** (**oo-leh-MAH**)—Arabic for “people with (religious) knowledge”—worked against any permanent division of the Islamic umma.

ulama Muslim religious scholars. From the ninth century onward, the primary interpreters of Islamic law and the social core of Muslim urban societies.

Assault from Within and Without, 1050–1258

Turks in the Middle East

The role played by Turkish mamluks in the decline of Abbasid power established an enduring stereotype of the Turk as a ferocious, unsophisticated warrior. This image gained strength in the 1030s when the Seljuk (**sel-JOOK**) family established a Turkish Muslim state based on nomadic power. Taking the Arabic title *Sultan*, meaning “power,” and the revived Persian title *Shahan-shah*, or King of Kings, the Seljuk ruler Tughril (**TUUG-ruhl**) Beg created a kingdom that stretched from northern Afghanistan to Baghdad, which he occupied in 1055. After a century under the thumb of the Shi'ite Buyids, the Abbasid caliph breathed easier under the slightly



V&A Images/Victoria & Albert Museum

Spanish Muslim Textile of the Twelfth Century This fragment of woven silk, featuring peacocks and Arabic writing, is one of the finest examples of Islamic weaving. The cotton industry flourished in the early Islamic centuries, but silk remained a highly valued product. Some fabrics were treasured in Christian Europe.

Economic Decline

between rival schools of Sunni law, rulers generally remained aloof, even as destruction and loss of life mounted.

By the early twelfth century, unrepaired damage from floods, fires, and civil disorder had reduced old Baghdad on the west side of the Tigris to ruins. The withering of Baghdad reflected a broader environmental problem: the collapse of the canal system on which agriculture in the Tigris and Euphrates Valley depended. For millennia a center of world civilization, Mesopotamia underwent substantial population loss and never again regained its geographical importance.

The Turks alone cannot be blamed for the demographic and economic misfortunes of Iran and Iraq. Too-robust urbanization and an apparent chilling of the climate after 1000 had strained food resources. The growing practice of paying soldiers and courtiers with land grants led to absentee landlords using agents to collect taxes. These agents gouged villagers and took little interest in improving production, thus intensifying the agricultural crisis.

The Crusader Challenge

Internecine feuding was preoccupying the Seljuk family when the first Christian crusaders reached the Holy Land and captured Jerusalem in 1099 (see Chapter 9). Though charged with the stuff of romance, the Crusades had little lasting impact on the Islamic lands. The four crusader principalities of Edessa, Antioch, Tripoli, and Jerusalem simply became pawns in the shifting pattern of politics already in place. Newly arrived knights eagerly attacked the Muslim enemy, whom they called “Saracens (**SAR-uh-suhn**)”; but veteran crusaders recognized that practicing diplomacy and seeking partners of convenience among rival Muslim princes offered a sounder strategy.

The Muslims finally unified to face the European enemy in the mid-twelfth century. Nur al-Din ibn Zangi (**NOOR al-DEEN ib-uhn ZAN-gee**) established a strong state based in Damascus and sent an army to terminate the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt. A nephew of the Kurdish commander of that expedition, Salah-al-Din, known in the West as Saladin, took advantage of Nur al-Din’s timely death to seize power and unify Egypt and Syria. The Fatimid dynasty fell in 1171. In 1187 Saladin recaptured Jerusalem from the Europeans.

Saladin’s descendants fought off subsequent Crusades. After one such battle, however, in 1250, Turkish mamluk troops seized control of the government in Cairo, ending Saladin’s dynasty. In 1260 these mamluks rode east to confront a new invading force. At the Battle of Ain Jalut (**ine jah-LOOT**) (Spring of Goliath) in Syria, they met and defeated an army of Mongols from Central Asia (see Chapter 12), thus stemming an invasion that had begun several decades before and legitimizing their claim to dominion over Egypt and Syria.

Mamluk Sultans

During the ensuing Mamluk period a succession of slave-soldier sultans ruled Egypt and Syria until 1517. Fear of new Mongol attacks receded after 1300, but by then the new ruling system had become fixed. Young Turkish or Circassian slaves, the latter from the eastern end of the Black Sea, were imported from non-Muslim lands, raised in training barracks, and converted to Islam. Owing loyalty to the Mamluk officers who purchased them, they formed a military class that was socially disconnected from the Arabic-speaking native population.

SECTION REVIEW

- By 711, Arab armies had conquered an empire stretching from Sind in the east to Spain in the west.
- The Umayyad caliphs ruled an ethnic empire; they governed from Damascus using Sasanid and Byzantine administrative methods.
- The Umayyads fell to rebels who established the Abbasid Caliphate at Baghdad, while surviving Umayyads fled to Spain.
- Influenced by Persian culture, the Abbasids presided over significant spiritual, intellectual, and artistic activity.
- Abbasid decline led to fragmentation of the caliphate into independent states, but the Islamic umma remained intact.
- Political divisions continued as successor states to the former caliphate fell, replaced by Seljuk Turk, Crusader, Mamluk, and Mongol states.

The Mongol invasions, especially their destruction of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad in 1258, shocked the world of Islam. The Mamluk sultan enthroned a relative of the last Baghdad caliph in Cairo, but the Egyptian Abbasids were mere puppets serving Mamluk interests. From Iraq eastward, non-Muslim rule lasted for much of the thirteenth century. Although the Mongols left few ethnic or linguistic traces in these lands, their initial destruction of cities and slaughter of civilian populations, their diversion of Silk Road trade from Baghdad to more northerly routes ending at Black Sea ports, and their casual disregard, even after conversion to Islam, for Muslim religious life and urban culture hastened currents of change already under way.

ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

Though increasingly unsettled in its political dimension and subject to economic disruptions caused by war, the ever-expanding Islamic world underwent a fruitful evolution in law, social structure, and religious expression. Religious conversion and urbanization reinforced each other to create a distinct Islamic civilization. The immense geographical and human diversity of the Muslim lands allowed many “small traditions” to coexist with the developing “great tradition” of Islam.

Law and Dogma

The Shari’a, the law of Islam, provides the foundation of Islamic civilization. Yet aside from certain Quranic verses conveying specific divine ordinances—most pertaining to personal and family matters—Islam had no legal system in the time of Muhammad. Arab custom and the Prophet’s own authority offered the only guidance. After Muhammad died, the umma tried to follow his example. This became harder and harder to do, however, as those who knew Muhammad best passed away and many Arabs found themselves living in far-off lands. Non-Arab converts to Islam, who at first tried to follow Arab customs they had little familiarity with, had an even harder time.

Sunna and Hadith

hadith A tradition relating the words or deeds of the Prophet Muhammad; next to the Quran, the most important basis for Islamic law.

Islam slowly developed laws to govern social and religious life. The full sense of Islamic civilization, however, goes well beyond the basic Five Pillars mentioned earlier. Some Muslim thinkers felt that the reasoned consideration of a mature man offered the best resolution of issues not covered by Quranic revelation. Others argued for the sunna, or tradition, of the Prophet as the best guide. To understand that sunna they collected and studied thousands of reports, called **hadith** (**hah-DEETH**), purporting to convey the precise words or deeds of Muhammad. It became customary to precede each hadith with a chain of oral authorities leading back to the person who had direct acquaintance with the Prophet.

Many hadith dealt with ritual matters, such as how to wash before prayer. Others provided answers to legal questions not covered by Quranic revelation or suggested principles for deciding such matters. By the eleventh century most legal thinkers had accepted the idea that

Muhammad's personal behavior provided the best role model and that the hadith constituted the most authoritative basis for law after the Quran itself.

Yet the hadith posed a problem because the tens of thousands of anecdotes included both genuine and invented reports, the latter sometimes politically motivated, as well as stories derived from non-Muslim religious traditions. Only a specialist could hope to separate a sound from a weak tradition. As the hadith grew in importance, so did the branch of learning devoted to their analysis. Scholars discarded thousands for having faulty chains of authority. The most reliable they collected into books that gradually achieved authoritative status. Sunnis placed six books in this category; Shi'ites, four.

As it gradually evolved, the Shari'a embodied a vision of an umma in which all subscribed to the same moral values and political and ethnic distinctions lost importance. Every Muslim ruler was expected to abide by and enforce the religious law. In practice, this expectation often lost out in the hurly-burly of political life. But the Shari'a proved an important basis for an urban lifestyle that varied surprisingly little from Morocco to India.

Converts and Cities

Conversion to Islam, more the outcome of people's learning about the new rulers' religion than an escape from the tax on non-Muslims, as some scholars have suggested, helped spur urbanization. Conversion did not require extensive knowledge of the faith. To become a Muslim, a person simply stated, in the presence of a Muslim: "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God."

Impact of Conversion

Few converts spoke Arabic, and fewer could read the Quran. Many converts knew no more of the Quran than the verses they memorized for daily prayers. Muhammad had established no priesthood to define and spread the faith. Thus new converts, whether Arab or non-Arab, faced the problem of finding out for themselves what Islam was about and how they should act as Muslims. This meant spending time with Muslims, learning their language, and imitating their practices.

In many areas, conversion involved migrating to an Arab governing center. The alternative, converting to Islam but remaining in one's home community, was difficult because religion had become the main component of social identity in Byzantine and Sasanid times. Converts to Islam thus encountered discrimination if they stayed in their Christian, Jewish, or Zoroastrian communities. Migration both averted discrimination and took advantage of the economic opportunities opened up by tax revenues flowing into the Arab governing centers.

Urban Growth

The Arab military settlements of Kufa and Basra in Iraq blossomed into cities and became important centers for Muslim cultural activities. As conversion rapidly spread in the mid-ninth century, urbanization accelerated in other regions, most visibly in Iran, where most cities previously had been quite small. Nishapur in the northeast grew from fewer than 10,000 pre-Islamic inhabitants to between 100,000 and 200,000 by the year 1000. Other Iranian cities experienced similar growth. In Iraq, Baghdad and Mosul joined Kufa and Basra as major cities. In Syria, Aleppo and Damascus flourished under Muslim rule. Fustat in Egypt developed into Cairo, one of the largest and greatest Islamic cities. The primarily Christian patriarchal cities of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, not being Muslim governing centers, shrank and stagnated.

Conversion-related migration meant that cities became heavily Muslim before the countryside did. This reinforced the urban orientation deriving from the fact that Muhammad and his first followers came from the commercial city of Mecca. Mosques in large cities served both as ritual centers and as places for learning and social activities.

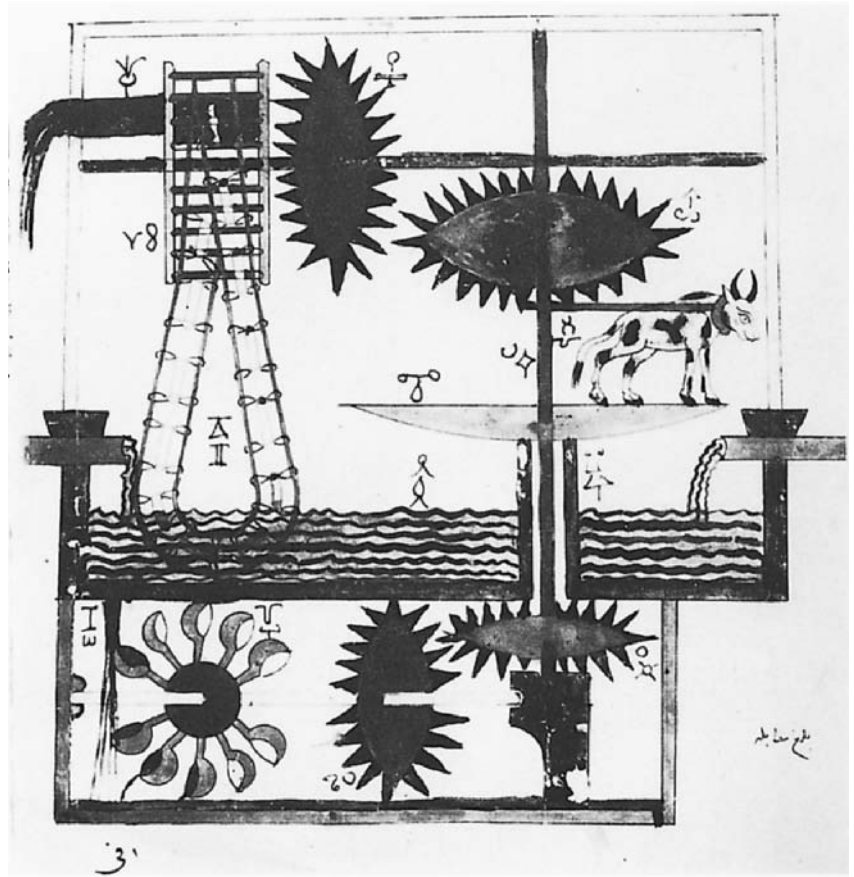
Islam and Society

Islam colored all aspects of urban social life (see Diversity and Dominance: Secretaries, Turks, and Beggars). Initially the new Muslims imitated Arab dress and customs and emulated people they regarded as particularly pious. In the absence of a central religious authority, local variations developed in the way people practiced Islam and in the hadith they attributed to the Prophet. This gave the rapidly growing religion the flexibility to accommodate many different social situations.

By the tenth century, urban growth was affecting the countryside by expanding the consumer market. Citrus fruits, rice, and sugar cane, introduced by the Sasanids, increased in acreage and spread to new areas. Cotton became a major crop in Iran and elsewhere and stimulated textile production. Irrigation works expanded. Abundant coinage facilitated a flourishing



Model of a Water-Lifting Device The artist's effort to render a three-dimensional construction in two dimensions shows a talent for schematic drawing.



Visual Connection Archive

Technology and Science

intercity and long-distance trade that provided regular links between isolated districts and integrated the pastoral nomads, who provided pack animals, into the region's economy. Trade encouraged the manufacture of cloth, metal goods, and pottery.

Science and technology also flourished (see Environment and Technology: Chemistry). Building on Hellenistic traditions and their own observations and experience, Muslim doctors and astronomers developed skills and theories far in advance of their European counterparts. Working in Egypt in the eleventh century, the mathematician and physicist Ibn al-Haytham (**IB-uhn al-HY-tham**) wrote more than a hundred works. Among other things, he determined that the Milky Way lies far beyond earth's atmosphere, proved that light travels from a seen object to the eye and not the reverse, and explained why the sun and moon appear larger on the horizon than overhead.

Women and Slaves

Women seldom traveled. Those living in rural areas worked in the fields and tended animals. Urban women, particularly members of the elite, lived in seclusion and did not leave their homes without covering themselves (see Material Culture: Head Coverings). Seclusion of women and veiling in public already existed in Byzantine and Sasanid times. Through interpretation of specific verses from the Quran, these practices now became fixtures of Muslim social life. Although women sometimes became literate and studied with relatives, they did so away from the gaze of unrelated men, and while they played influential roles within the family, public roles were generally barred. Only slave women could perform before unrelated men as musicians and dancers. A man could have sexual relations with as many slave concubines as he pleased, in addition to marrying as many as four wives.

Muslim women fared better legally under Islamic law than did Christian and Jewish women under their respective religious codes. Because Islamic law guaranteed daughters a share in



AP* Exam Tip The role of women in Islamic societies is an important comparison topic on the essay portion of the exam.

Women's Legal Status

Secretaries, Turks, and Beggars

The passages below fall into the category of Arabic literature known as adab, or belles-lettres. The purpose of adab was to entertain and instruct through a succession of short anecdotes, verses, and expository discussions. It attracted the finest writers of the Abbasid era and affords one of the richest sources for looking at everyday life, always keeping in mind that the intended readers were a restricted class of educated men, including merchants, court and government officials, and even men of religion.

One of the greatest masters of Arabic prose, Jahiz (776–869), was a famously ugly man—his name means “Popeyed”—of Abyssinian family origin. Spending part of his life in his native Basra, in southern Iraq, and part in Baghdad, the Abbasid capital, he wrote voluminously on subjects ranging from theology to zoology to miserliness. These excerpts are from two of his short essays, “Censure of the Conduct of Secretaries” and “The Virtues of the Turks.”

Censure of the Conduct of Secretaries

Furthermore, the foundation on which writing is based [is] that only a subordinate should take [it] up and only one who is in a sense a servant [can] master it. We have never seen an important person undertake it for its own sake or share in his secretary’s work. Every secretary is required to be loyal and requested to bear hardship patiently. The most diverse conditions are imposed on him and he is sorely tried. The secretary has no right to set any of those conditions. On the contrary, he is thought slow at the first lapse even if exhausted and censured at the first error even if unintentional. A slave is entitled to many complaints against his master. He can request his sale

to another if he wishes. The secretary has no way to lay claim to his late back wages or to leave his patron if he acts unfairly. He is governed by the rules for slaves. His status is that of a dolt.

It should be enough for you to know of this group that the noblest of them is at the bottom of the pay scale. The most wealthy of them are the least regarded by the ruler. The head of the secretariat who acts as spokesman to the nation earns a tenth of the income of the head of land tax. The scribe whose handwriting lends beauty to the communications of the caliph earns a fraction of the income of the head copyist in the land tax bureau. The correspondence secretary is not fetched for a disaster nor is his aid sought in a crisis. When the ministers have settled on a course of action and agreed in their appraisal, a note is tossed him with the gist of the order. He prepares the text. When he has finished his editing and straightened out the words, he brings in his copyist. He sits as near as anyone to the caliph, in a restricted location away from visitors. Once that task is completed, however, there is no difference between those two scribes and the common people.

The Virtues of the Turks

The Turk has with him at the moment of attack everything he needs for himself, his weapons, his mount, and equipment for it. His endurance is quite amazing for long riding, continuous travel, lengthy night trips, and crossing a land. . . . The Turk is more skilled than the veterinarian and better at teaching his mount what he wants than trainers. He bred it and raised it as a foal. It followed him if he called and galloped behind him when he galloped. . . . If you sum up the life of the Turk and reckon his days you will find he sits longer on the back of his mount than on the face of the earth.

inheritance equal to half that of a son, the majority of women inherited some amount of money or real estate. This remained their private property to keep or sell. Muslim law put the financial burden of supporting a family exclusively on the husband, who could not legally compel his wife to help out.

Women could also remarry if their husbands divorced them, and they received a cash payment upon divorce. Although a man could divorce his wife without stating a cause, a woman could initiate divorce under specified conditions. Women could also practice birth control. They could testify in court, although their testimony counted as half that of a man. They could also go on pilgrimage. Nevertheless, a misogynistic tone sometimes appears in Islamic writings. One saying attributed to the Prophet observed: “I was raised up to heaven and saw that most of its denizens were poor people; I was raised into the hellfire and saw that most of its denizens were women.”³

Muhammad’s Wife A’isha

In the absence of writings by women about women from this period, the status of women must be deduced from the writings of men. Two episodes involving the Prophet’s wife A’isha, the daughter of Abu Bakr, provide examples of how Muslim men appraised women in society. Only eighteen when Muhammad died, A’isha lived for another fifty years. Early reports stress her status as Muhammad’s favorite, the only virgin he married and the only wife to see the angel

If he is unable to hunt people, he hunts wild animals. If he is unsuccessful in that or needs nourishment, he bleeds one of his riding animals. If thirsty he milks one of his mares. If he wants to rest the one under him he mounts another without touching the ground. There is no one on earth besides him whose body would not reel against eating only meat. His mount is likewise satisfied with stubble, grass, and shrubs. He does not shade it from the sun or cover it against the cold. . . .

The Turk is a herdsman, groom, trainer, trader, veterinarian, and rider. A single Turk is a nation in himself.

Though rulers, warriors, and religious scholars dominate the traditional narratives, the society that developed over the early centuries of Islam was remarkably diverse. Beggars, tricksters, and street performers belonged to a single loose fraternity: the Banu Sasan, or Tvribe of Sasan. Tales of their tricks and exploits amused staid, pious Muslims, who often encountered them in cities and on their scholarly travels. The tenth-century poet Abu Dulaf al-Khazraji, who lived in Iran, studied the jargon of the Banu Sasan and their way of life and composed a long poem in which he cast himself as one of the group. However, he added a commentary to each verse to explain the jargon words that his sophisticated court audience would have found unfamiliar.

We are the beggars' brotherhood, and no one can deny us our lofty pride. . . .

And of our number is the feigned madman and mad woman, with metal charms strung from their necks.

And the ones with ornaments drooping from their ears, and with collars of leather or brass round their necks. . . .

And the one who simulates a festering internal wound, and the people with false bandages round their heads and sickly, jaundiced faces.

And the one who slashes himself, alleging that he has been mutilated by assailants, or the one who darkens his skin artificially pretending that he has been beaten up and wounded. . . .

And the one who practices as a manipulator and quack dentist, or who escapes from chains wound round his body, or the one who uses almost invisible silk thread mysteriously to draw off rings. . . .

And of our number are those who claim to be refugees from the Byzantine frontier regions, those who go round begging on pretext of having left behind captive families. . . .

And the one who feigns an internal discharge, or who showers the passers-by with his urine, or who farts in the mosque and makes a nuisance of himself, thus wheedling money out of people. . . .

And of our number are the ones who purvey objects of veneration made from clay, and those who have their beards smeared with red dye.

And the one who brings up secret writing by immersing it in what looks like water, and the one who similarly brings up the writing by exposing it to burning embers.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Why might the ruling elite have found the descriptions of diverse social groups entertaining?
2. What role does religion appear to play in the culture that patronized this type of literature?
3. How does the personality of the author show up in these passages?

Sources: First selection excerpts from *Nine Essays of al-Jahiz*, trans. William M. Hutchins (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), 56, 64, 196. Reprinted by permission of Peter Lang Publishing. Second selection excerpts from Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The Mediaeval Islamic Underworld: The Banu Sasan in Arabic Society and Literature* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 191–199. Copyright © 1976. With kind permission of © Koninklijke Brill N.V. Leiden, the Netherlands.

Homosexuality

Slavery

Gabriel. These reports emanate from A'isha herself, who was an abundant source of hadith. As a fourteen-year-old she had become separated from a caravan and rejoined it only after traveling through the night with a man who found her alone in the desert. Gossips accused her of being untrue to the Prophet, but a revelation from God proved her innocence. The second event was her participation in the Battle of the Camel, fought to derail Ali's caliphate. These two episodes came to epitomize what Muslim men feared most about women: sexual infidelity and meddling in politics. Even though the earliest literature dealing with A'isha stresses her position as Muhammad's favorite, his first wife, Khadija, and his daughter, Ali's wife Fatima, eventually surpassed A'isha as ideal women. Both appear as model wives and mothers with no suspicion of sexual irregularity or political manipulation.

As the seclusion of women became commonplace in urban Muslim society, some writers extolled homosexual relationships, partly because a male lover could appear in public or go on a journey. Although Islam deplored homosexuality, one ruler wrote a book advising his son to follow moderation in all things and thus share his affections equally between men and women. Another ruler and his slave-boy became models of perfect love in the verses of mystic poets.

Islam allowed slavery but forbade Muslims from enslaving other Muslims or so-called People of the Book—Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians, who revered holy books respected by the

Chemistry

Muslim scientists developed sophisticated chemical processes and used them to produce a broad range of goods, including glazes for pottery, rosewater (the distilled essence of roses), hard soap, gunpowder, and various types of glass. The words *chemistry* and *alchemy* are both related to the Arabic term for these activities, *al-kimiya*, and many chemical processes passed from the Muslim world to Europe.

Distillation was used at Baku in Azerbaijan to produce a light flammable liquid called “white *naft*,” roughly equivalent to kerosene, from crude oil. Special military units wearing fire-resistant clothing were trained to use white *naft* as an incendiary weapon. Flaming liquids, whose exact composition is still uncertain, could be put into pots and thrown, placed in containers attached to arrows, or pumped from a tube.

Islamic Glassware This glass bottle from Syria shows the skill of Muslim chemists and artisans in producing clear, transparent glass. The scratched decoration reflects the Muslim taste for geometric design.



The Corning Museum of Glass, 68.1.1

Muslims. Being enslaved as a prisoner of war constituted an exception. Later centuries saw a constant flow of slaves into Islamic territory from Africa and Central Asia. A hereditary slave society, however, did not develop. Usually slaves converted to Islam, and many masters then freed them as an act of piety. The offspring of slave women and Muslim men were born free.

The Recentering of Islam

Early Islam centered on the caliphate, the political expression of the unity of the umma. No formal organization or hierarchy, however, directed the process of conversion. Thus there emerged a multitude of local Islamic communities so disconnected from each other that numerous competing interpretations of the developing religion arose. Inevitably, the centrality of the caliphate diminished (see Map 8.1). The appearance of rival caliphates in Tunisia and Cordoba accentuated the problem of decentralization.

The rise of the ulama as community leaders did not prevent growing fragmentation because the ulama themselves divided into contentious factions. During the twelfth century factionalism began to abate, and new socioreligious institutions emerged to provide the umma with a different sort of religious center. These new developments stemmed in part from an exodus of religious scholars from Iran in response to economic and political disintegration during the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. The flow of Iranians to the Arab lands and to newly conquered territories in India and Anatolia increased after the Mongol invasion.

Fully versed in Arabic as well as their native Persian, immigrant scholars were warmly received. They brought with them a view of religion developed in Iran’s urban centers. A type of religious college, the *madrasa* (**MAH-dras-uh**), gained sudden popularity outside Iran, where madrasas had been known since the tenth century. Scores of madrasas, many founded by local rulers, appeared throughout the Islamic world.

The Ulama

Madrasas

Head Coverings

Covering the head is one of the most universal of human cultural characteristics. It is also one of the most common ways of signaling social status. Examples can be drawn from every part of the world, from earliest times down to the modern era. In premodern Chinese society, the color and design of a man's cap indicated his rank as clearly as the insignia on military head coverings does today. In most European societies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, men and frequently women of the higher social orders wore wigs, a practice that still survives in the costume of British judges.

Head coverings were particularly important for royalty. From ancient Egypt, where the earliest Pharaonic crowns symbolized the union of the northern and southern parts of the Nile Valley, down to the twentieth century and the jewel-studded crown of the shah of Iran, each land developed its own distinctive royal headdress. This also held true for Native American societies in pre-Columbian times and for African and Polynesian societies. In some societies, such as Sasanid Iran and the Ottoman Empire in what is today Turkey, each ruler's crown or turban had a distinctive design that signaled his rule.

Head coverings have also played significant roles in religion. In orthodox Judaism, for example, men wear hats or skullcaps, and married women wear wigs, as signs of acceptance of God's laws. In Islam, head coverings for women, borrowed from pre-Islamic practice in the Middle East, have become politically controversial in recent years; but prior to the twentieth century it was considered equally improper for a Muslim man to go bareheaded.

Wearing no hat at all was usually a characteristic of slaves or of the poorest elements in society. But it could also signify a deliberate desire to be regarded as humble. Sumerian priests, Buddhist monks and nuns, and certain Sufis in the Muslim world shaved their heads clean. In Europe, early Christian monks and priests shaved the crown of their heads in the Roman Catholic tradition. This form of tonsure competed with and eventually superseded an Irish Catholic practice of shaving the front of the head. Yet head shaving did not always signify humility. Japanese samurai, or warriors, also shaved the front of their heads.

Head coverings for women, as well as wigs and hairdressing styles, sometimes show greater diversity than those for men. This has been particularly true in societies where women of high status mix with men on public occasions. A magnificent wig, hat, or coiffure under these circumstances might speak



Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. Arabe 5847 (Schefer Hariri) folio 26 recto

Muslim Headcoverings The man standing before a governor in this thirteenth century miniature painting wears a simple skullcap indicating his low social status. The two attendants wear turbans, but the governor's turban is built into a high, conical shape. The folds and tails of turbans signified not only rank, but also place of origin. To this day, men from western Afghanistan wear tightly wound white turbans with long tails while men from eastern Afghanistan wear loose colorful turbans.

as much for the social rank of the woman's husband as for her own.

Given this long history of distinctive head coverings, the abandonment of both men's and women's hats in the second half of the twentieth century marked a major turning point in the history of symbolism. Around the world, the hat-making industry has greatly contracted. Whether one visits China, Egypt, India, France, or Brazil, one finds it difficult to determine the rank or status of most people by looking at what they have on their heads. Heads of government typically pose for group photographs with no hats on at all. Aside from conservative religious groups, the head coverings that remain most often indicate occupations: military, police, construction, athletics, and so on.

The reasons for this change are unclear. The spread of democracy and decline of aristocracy may have contributed to it, but hats have become equally uncommon in dictatorships. A more likely cause is the worldwide role of news photographs, movies, and other pictorial media. The media developed in Europe and the United States tend to take Western customs as normal and exoticize non-Western styles as "native costumes." People everywhere have thus felt pressure to switch to Western styles, including bareheadedness, to fit into the image of the modern world.



Institut Anatolien d'Art Hispanique. © Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid

Women Playing Chess in Muslim Spain As shown in this thirteenth-century miniature, women in their own quarters, without men present, wore whatever clothes and jewels they liked. Notice the henna decorating the hands of the woman in the middle. The woman on the left, probably a slave, plays an oud.

Sufi Brotherhoods

Iranians also contributed to the growth of mystic groups known as *Sufi* brotherhoods in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The doctrines and rituals of certain Sufis spread from city to city, giving rise to the first geographically extensive Islamic religious organizations. Sufi doctrines varied, but a quest for a sense of union with God through rituals and training was a common denominator. Sufism had begun in early Islamic times and had doubtless benefited from the ideas and beliefs of people from religions with mystic traditions who converted to Islam.

The early Sufis had been saintly individuals given to ecstatic and poetic utterances and wonder-working. They attracted disciples but did not try to organize them. The growth of brotherhoods, a less ecstatic form of Sufism, set a tone for society in general. It soon became common for most Muslim men, particularly in the cities, to belong to at least one brotherhood.

A sense of the social climate the Sufi brotherhoods fostered can be gained from a twelfth-century manual:

Every limb has its own special ethics. . . . The ethics of the tongue. The tongue should always be busy in reciting God's names (dhikr) and in saying good things of the brethren, praying for them, and giving them counsel. . . . The ethics of hearing. One should not listen to indecencies and slander. . . . The ethics of sight. One should lower one's eyes in order not to see forbidden things.⁴

SECTION REVIEW

- The foundation of Islamic civilization is the Shari'a, which is derived from the Quran and hadith.
- Urbanization and religious conversion reinforced each other and prompted the expansion of agriculture, trade, science, and technology.
- Women in general enjoyed relatively high status under Islamic law, though urban women tended to live in seclusion.
- Islamic attitudes toward homosexuality were ambivalent, and slavery was an accepted and continuous practice.
- Migrations of Iranian scholars centered Islam on the madrasa and contributed to the rise of Sufism.



Cambridge University Library

Quran Page Printed from a Woodblock Printing from woodblocks or tin plates existed in Islamic lands between approximately 800 and 1400. Most prints were narrow amulets designed to be rolled and worn around the neck in cylindrical cases. Less valued than handwritten amulets, many prints came from Banu Sasan con men. Why block-printing had so little effect on society in general and eventually disappeared is unknown.

Special dispensations allowed people who merely wanted to emulate the Sufis and enjoy their company to follow less demanding rules:

It is allowed by way of dispensation to possess an estate or to rely on a regular income. The Sufis' rule in this matter is that one should not use all of it for himself, but should dedicate this to public charities and should take from it only enough for one year for himself and his family. . . .

There is a dispensation allowing one to watch all kinds of amusement. This is, however, limited by the rule: What you are forbidden from doing, you are also forbidden from watching.⁵

Some Sufi brotherhoods spread in the countryside. Local shrines and pilgrimages to the tombs of Muhammad's descendants and saintly Sufis became popular. The end of the Abbasid Caliphate enhanced the religious centrality of Mecca, which eventually became an important center of madrasa education, and gave renewed importance to the annual pilgrimage.

CONCLUSION

Islam arose in a religious atmosphere created by the Sasanid Empire, which favored Zoroastrianism, and Byzantium, which favored Christianity. These strong state religions led to conflict among religious sects and also raised the possibility of the founder of a new religion commanding both political and religious loyalty on an unprecedented scale. This possibility was realized in the career of the prophet Muhammad in the seventh century.

Islam culminated the trend toward identity based on religion. The concept of the umma united all Muslims in a universal community embracing enormous diversity of language, appearance, and social custom. Though Muslim communities adapted to local "small traditions," by the twelfth century a religious scholar could travel anywhere in the Islamic world and blend easily into the local Muslim community.

By the ninth century, the forces of conversion and urbanization fostered social and religious experimentation in urban settings. From the eleventh century onward, political disruption and the spread of pastoral nomadism slowed this early economic and technological dynamism. Muslim communities then turned to new religious institutions, such as the madrasas and Sufi brotherhoods, to create the flexible and durable community structures that carried Islam into new regions and protected ordinary believers from capricious political rule.

KEY TERMS

Mecca p. 228	Medina p. 230	Shi'ites p. 232	mamluks p. 234
Muhammad p. 228	umma p. 230	Umayyad Caliphate p. 232	Ghana p. 235
Muslim p. 230	caliphate p. 231	Sunnis p. 232	ulama p. 237
Islam p. 230	Quran p. 231	Abbasid Caliphate p. 233	hadith p. 239

EBOOK AND WEBSITE RESOURCES

Primary Sources

The Constitution of Medina: Muslims and Jews at the Dawn of Islam
The Quran: Muslim Devotion to God

Interactive Maps

Map 8.1 Early Expansion of Muslim Rule
Map 8.2 Rise and Fall of the Abbasid Caliphate

Plus flashcards, practice quizzes, and more. Go to:
www.cengage.com/history/bulletearthpeople5e

SUGGESTED READING

- al-Hassan, Ahmad Y., and Donald R. Hill. *Islamic Technology: An Illustrated History*. 1986. Introduces a little-studied field.
- Armstrong, Karen. *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*. 1993. A sympathetic work with an ecumenical tone.
- Berkey, Jonathan. *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600–1800*. 2003. A short and lively survey.
- Bloom, Jonathan. *Paper Before Print*. 2001. A superb study of paper and papermaking in medieval Islamic culture.
- Bulliet, Richard W. *Islam: The View from the Edge*. 1993. An approach that concentrates on the lives of converts to Islam and local religious notables.
- Choksy, Jamsheed K. *Conflict and Cooperation: Zoroastrian Subalterns and Muslim Elites in Medieval Iranian Society*. 1997. Exploits Arabic and Middle Persian sources to detail the interaction of religious communities.
- Donner, Fred. *Narratives of Islamic Origins*. 1998. Discusses the new school of thought that rejects the traditional accounts of Muhammad's life and of the origins of the Quran.
- Gervers, Michael, and Ramzi Jibran Bikhazi, eds. *Conversion and Continuity: Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands, Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries*. 1990. Articles in this collection detail Christian responses to Islam.
- Glick, Thomas F. *From Muslim Fortress to Christian Castle: Social and Cultural Change in Medieval Spain*. 1995. Questions standard ideas about Christians and Muslims from a geographical and technological standpoint.
- Lapidus, Ira M. *A History of Islamic Societies*, 2nd ed. 2002. A lengthy work that focuses on social developments and includes Islam outside the Middle East.
- Laroui, Abdallah. *The History of the Maghrib: An Interpretive Essay*. 1977. Challenges traditional French scholarship on North Africa.
- Lassner, Jacob. *A Mediterranean Society: An Abridgement in One Volume*. 1999. Summary of S. D. Goitein's multivolume study of the Jews of medieval Egypt.
- Sells, Michael. *Approaching the Qur'an: The Early Revelations*. 1999. An insightful reading of parts of the Quran, which Muslims regard as untranslatable. Most "interpretations" in English adhere reasonably closely to the Arabic text.
- Spellberg, Denise. *Politics, Gender, and the Islamic Past: The Legacy of A'isha bint Abi Bakr*. 1994. A pathbreaking work on the methodology of women's history.
- Waines, David. *An Introduction to Islam*. 1995. A reliable starting point for studying the religion of Islam.
- Wiesehöfer, Josef. *Ancient Persia*. 2001. A solid survey that includes the Sasanid period.

NOTES

1. Quran. Sura 96, verses 1–5.
2. Quran. Sura 92, verses 1–10.
3. Richard W. Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 87.
4. Abu Najib al-Suhrawardi, *A Sufi Rule for Novices*, trans. Menahem Milson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 45–58.
5. *Ibid.*, 73–82.

AP* REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 8

- Which of the following is true of southern Arabia by the 600s?
 - It was an isolated and remote region that had seen no development.
 - Most people in the region had some familiarity with Africa, India, and the Persian Gulf region.
 - It had been annexed to the Sasanid Empire.
 - The Byzantine Empire treated it as a tributary state.
- As the caravan trade across Arabia developed, Arab pastoralists
 - raided caravans for their wealth.
 - became merchants and sold Arabian goods to caravan leaders.
 - became part-time farmers and produced food crops to sell to the caravans.
 - became the primary providers of animal power throughout the region.
- Muhammad became a caravan merchant
 - because his father was one.
 - through his marriage to Khadija.
 - late in his life as a way to support spreading his message.
 - as a way to increase his political role in Arab society.
- In Arabic, *Islam* means
 - holy warrior for God.
 - one who appears before God in glory.
 - one who makes submission to the will of God.
 - obedient servant of God.
- In Medina, Muhammad and his followers formed the community of believers in Islam and in Muhammad as the “Messenger of God,” called the
 - hijira.
 - caliphate.
 - fatwa.
 - hajj.
- The schism in Islam was caused by
 - the fact that Muhammad had not clarified his successor.
 - Iranian followers who believed that the Quran was sacred.
 - the marriage of Khadija to Ishmael.
 - Meccans who reverted to Judaism.
- Which of the following is true of the Quran?
 - It was written and published by Muhammad.
 - It is not published even today.
 - Only the priests of the faith can possess the text.
 - Abu Bakr reportedly ordered that it be written down.
- The Muslims who supported the first four caliphs came to be called “People of tradition and Community,” or
 - Shi’ites.
 - Israelites.
 - Kharijites.
 - Sunnis.
- Between 636 and 639, the Muslims wrenched both Syria and Egypt from
 - the Byzantine Empire.
 - the Greeks.
 - the Egyptians.
 - the Sasanids.
- By the early 700s, the Muslim empire stretched from
 - Mecca to Baghdad.
 - Spain to India.
 - Turkey to Iran.
 - Arabia to Syria and Egypt.

11. Which of the following is true of the regions conquered by the Muslims between 636 and the early 700s?
- (A) The people were forced to convert to Islam or perish.
 - (B) The Muslim invaders displaced the wealthy and confiscated their homes and lands.
 - (C) The majority of the people lived their lives unchanged.
 - (D) Jews and Christians were openly persecuted by the Muslims.
12. Which of the following is true of the Umayyad caliphs?
- (A) They were devout Muslims and forced all of their subjects to be Muslims.
 - (B) They moved the Muslim capital to Basra.
 - (C) Their armies lost major conflicts with the Byzantine Empire.
 - (D) They ruled over an ethnically defined Arab realm rather than a Muslim empire.
13. The Abbasid caliphs
- (A) ruled over an increasingly Muslim empire.
 - (B) refused to allow the construction of any large mosques in Baghdad.
 - (C) refrained from allowing the reinterpretation of the Quran.
 - (D) banned Islamic education.
14. One of the major problems the Abbasid caliphs faced was
- (A) frontier revolts that they were slow to reach.
 - (B) diminishing harvest due to overuse of the land.
 - (C) attacks from the ulama for being religiously tolerant.
 - (D) a shortage of gold and silver coins.
15. By the late eighth century, it is known that the Muslims had expanded their trade empire to
- (A) England.
 - (B) Russia.
 - (C) Ghana.
 - (D) Zimbabwe.
16. Which of the following is true of the early rule of the Seljuk Turks?
- (A) Their rule was accompanied by a general decline in both Iran and Iraq.
 - (B) They persecuted the most devout of the Muslims and tolerated only the moderate sects of Islam.
 - (C) They began the minting of gold coins and banned the use of copper coins.
 - (D) Under their rule only non-Muslims paid taxes.
17. Which of the following is an accurate statement?
- (A) None of the Muslim leaders adopted Shari'a law because they believed they would lose control under it.
 - (B) High taxation led to a decline in the food supplies in the Muslim empires.
 - (C) Islamic law granted women greater status than did Jewish or Christian law.
 - (D) Arabic became the universal language of the Muslim empire under the Seljuk Turks.